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Expectations for Corn and Soybean Crops Continue to Rise

Maryland: As the fall harvest season progresses, Maryland grain producers are increasingly optimistic about this year's production. If realized, corn and soybeans yields will be second only to the record-setting yields of 2000. Based on October 1 crop conditions, **corn** is forecast to yield 152 bushels per acre, up 9 bushels per acre from last month's forecast of 143 bushels per acre. This compares favorably to the record-setting yield of 155 bushels per acre set in 2000. With an anticipated harvest of 420,000 acres, total production is forecast at 63.8 million bushels. According to the Weekly Crop and Weather Report for the week ending October 4, corn condition was rated 47 percent excellent, 31 percent good, 16 percent fair, 4 percent poor, and 2 percent very poor. Corn harvest for grain was 51% complete, running ahead of the 5-year average of 42%.

Soybean yield is forecast at 41 bushels per acre, up 3 bushels per acre from the September 1 forecast, and 2 bushels short of the record-setting average yield of 43 bushels per acre in 2000. Growers expect to harvest 490,000 acres of soybeans, for a total production of 20.1 million bushels. The Weekly Crop and Weather Report for the week ending October 4 reports the soybean condition at 28 percent rated excellent, 51 percent good, 16 percent fair, 3 percent poor, and 2 percent very poor. Soybean harvest is beginning right on schedule, with 7% of the crop harvested as of October 4.

Tobacco production, based on October 1 conditions, is forecast at 1.76 million pounds, unchanged from the September 1 forecast. Yields are expected to be 1,600 pounds per acre, a record yield in Maryland. Harvested acreage remains at 1,100 acres, same as 2003.

Final estimates for small grains have been calculated. Total production of winter wheat is estimated to be 8.6 million bushels for the 2004 crop season, with 145,000 acres of **winter wheat** harvested and an average yield of 59.0 bushels per acre. Total production of **barley** is estimated to be 2.8 million bushels for the 2004 crop season, with 39,000 acres harvested and an average yield of 73.0 bushels per acre.

United States: **Corn** production is forecast at 11.6 billion bushels, up 6 percent from last month and 15 percent above 2003. Based on conditions as of October 1, the yield is expected to average 158.4 bushels per acre, up 9.0 bushels from September and 16.2 bushels above last year. If realized, both production and yield would be the largest on record. The previous record for both was set last year when production was estimated at 10.1 billion bushels and yield was 142.2 bushels per acre. Yields are forecast at record high levels in all Corn Belt States, except Minnesota and Wisconsin, as weather conditions have been mostly favorable throughout the growing season. Based on administrative information, acreage updates were made in several States and farmers now expect to harvest 73.3 million acres of corn for grain, down 66,000 acres from September but up 3 percent from 2003.

Soybean production is forecast at 3.11 billion bushels, up 10 percent from the September forecast and 27 percent above 2003. If realized, this would be the largest U.S. soybean crop on record. Based on conditions as of October 1, yield is expected to average a record high 42.0 bushels per acre, up 3.5 bushels from September. Below-normal temperatures and adequate moisture during August and early September across most of the Corn Belt, Great Plains, and Delta were beneficial to the crop during the final stages of development. Above-normal temperatures followed, during the rest of September, just in time for the beginning of the harvest season. Based on administrative data, acreage updates were made in several States. Area planted is now estimated at 75.1 million acres, up 256,000 acres from the August estimate. Area for harvest is forecast at 74.0 million acres, up 335,000 from September.

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ACREAGE, YIELD, AND PRODUCTION 2003 AND 2004

Commodity	Unit	Planted		Harvested		Average Yield		Production	
		2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Maryland		<i>1,000 Acres</i>						<i>1,000</i>	
Corn ¹	ACR	480	490	----	----	----	----	----	----
Corn Grain	BU	----	----	410	420	123	152	50,430	63,840
Corn Silage	TON	----	----	65	----	16	----	1,040	----
Soybeans	BU	435	500	430	490	37	41	15,910	20,090
Sorghum ¹	BU	6	5	----	----	----	----	----	----
Sorghum Grain	BU	----	----	3	3	65	----	195	----
Sorghum Silage	TON	----	----	3	----	10	----	30	----
Winter Wheat	BU	165	160	145	145	37	59	5,365	8,555
Barley	BU	43	42	36	39	57	73	2,052	2,847
All Hay	TON	----	----	195	205	2.8	----	539	----
Alfalfa Hay	TON	----	----	45	35	3.3	----	149	----
Other Hay	TON	----	----	150	170	2.6	----	390	----
Tobacco	LBS	----	----	1.1	1.1	1,450	1,600	1,595	1,760
Apples	LBS	----	----	----	----	----	----	40,000	34,000
Peaches	LBS	----	----	----	----	----	----	8,500	8,800
Potatoes, Summer	CWT	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	240	260	1,104	1,196
United States								<i>1,000,000</i>	
Corn ¹	ACR	78,736	80,968	----	----	----	----	----	----
Corn Grain	BU	----	----	71,139	73,311	142	158	10,114	11,613
Corn Silage	TON	----	----	6,528	----	16	----	106	----
Soybeans	BU	73,404	75,065	72,476	73,990	33.9	42.0	2,454	3,107
Sorghum ¹	BU	9,420	7,528	----	----	----	----	----	----
Sorghum Grain	BU	----	----	7,798	6,559	52.7	70.4	411	462
Sorghum Silage	TON	----	----	343	----	10.4	----	4	----
Wheat, Winter	BU	45,384	43,350	36,753	34,462	47	43	1,717	1,499
Barley	BU	5,348	4,527	4,727	4,031	59	70	278	280
All Hay	TON	----	----	63,342	61,589	2.48	2.69	157	166
Alfalfa Hay	TON	----	----	23,578	22,226	3.24	3.48	76	77
Other Hay	TON	----	----	39,764	39,363	2.03	2.25	81	89
Tobacco	LBS	----	----	411.2	409.6	1,952	2,156	803	883
Apples	LBS	----	----	----	----	----	----	8,613	9,459
Peaches	LBS	----	----	----	----	----	----	2,519	2,598
Potatoes, Summer	CWT	63.4	58.8	58.7	55.1	320	336	19	18

¹ Acres planted is for all purposes.